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Chapter One: In the beginning

[image] [image]

(Y/N)'s POV:

Darkness. That's the first thing I remember. It was dark but warm but I was scared until I opened my eyes and saw the moon. It was so big and bright and it seemed to chase the darkness away. And, when it did, I wasn't scared anymore. At first, I didn't know why I was here. Apart of me wonders if I ever will know why I'm here. I was in a room with a beautiful view of the moon.

I looked around and found a bow with two arrows. One with a heart tip and one with a gold tip. I took the bow and the heart-tipped arrow and shot it in the air making it explode once it reached a certain height. It exploded into hearts which cascaded down into the room. I did the same thing with the golden tipped arrow but it just came back to me. I could make them disappear and reappear at my command.

I started having fun with the heart arrow when I accidentally made myself fly with beautiful white angel wings I didn't know I had. I fell. Once I landed, I tried flying to a town I saw nearby. I arrived and tried asking people to tell me where I was but everyone passed through me. Oh, silly me. I should introduce myself. My name is (Y/N) Cupid or just Cupid as everyone calls me. But how do I know this? The moon told me so. That's all he ever told me. And what happened was a long time ago.

(Timeskip! 800 years later)

The 14th of February may be over but that doesn't mean my job is done. As Cupid, I make relationships happen and it happens every day. I had many upgrades during the last 800 years but I've settled with a pink and white jumpsuit dress with flowers and a cape with me on it. Or what people think I look like.

I've also made a new friend. I met him 300 years ago. His name is

Jack Frost and, boy, does he like to have fun. He has occasionally helped me with relationships by accident. Speaking of Jack, I caught up with him talking bad about Bunny, the Easter Bunny. He was watching a young boy named Jamie. I swear he addicted to this kid.

"Hey, Cupid," Jack said noticing me.

"Jack," I said smiling.

"Been a while."

"I saw what you did in Russia. You ruined another one of my couples again."

"I didn't mean to."

"Because you're my friend, I'll let it slide."

Jamie's mum came out and gave her son his hat telling him not to let Jack nip at his nose. No one has believed in me or Jack ever since Man in the moon put us on this Earth. It's annoying really because we work hard to make everything happen and we're just fairy-tales to parents and kids. Or me and Jack are just expressions. Jack decided to try make Jamie and his friends see us with a snowball again and a snowball fight started.

I stayed out of it. Only to end up chasingJack who made the ground slippery so Jamie could ride his sled. They went into the street and I flew after Jack telling him to stop. But when does he ever listen to me? Answer: never. Jack then made Jamiefly in the air and land into some snow near a statue. Jamie was unphased, surprisingly, and told his friends what happened when he was hit by a sofa.

That must've come from the moving truck that sliding accidentally released all its cargo. Jamie was unphased again when he popped up with his front tooth in his hand. Jamie and his friends left and, it turned out, they never saw me or Jack even before the snowball fight. Jack flew off leaving me alone. I left after because I had a job to do. My night was the usual. Love, love, and more love.

I took a break when I saw Sandman at work giving all the children's

dreams. Streams of golden, glowing sand filled the sky. I always loved when Sandman was at work because his work is so beautiful. I touched one of the sad streams to see tap-dancing penguins. Sandman stopped his work and I felt something whiz past me. Jack was following it so I decided to follow. We ended up in an alleyway. I made my bow and golden tipped arrow out ready to shoot something.

"Hello, mates," we turned to where the Australasian voice came from to see Bunny in the shadows with his boomerangs, "Been a long time. Blizzard of '68, I believe. Easter Sunday, wasn't it?"

"Bunny! You're not still mad about that, are you?" Jack asked.

"Yes. And, Cupid, you made all my eggs have hearts on them in '87."

"They needed more love," I said.

"Well, this is about something else," Bunny said.

Some Yeti's came up from behind me and Jack and put us in a sack. We struggled to stay away from each other until we were thrown to the floor. Two elves opened the sack before running off and we saw all the guardians. Bunny, Sandman, North, and Tooth.

"Hey, there they are! Jack Frost and Cupid!" North said in his Russian accent.

We were at the North Pole! Some Yeti's picked me and Jack up and put us on our feet.

"I hope the Yeti's treated you well," North said.

"Oh, yeah," Jack said picking up his staff with his foot, "We love being shoved in a sack and tossed through a magic portal."

"Oh, good. That was my idea," North said smiling, "you two know bunny, obviously."

"Obviously," I said.

"And the Tooth fairy," North said.

"Hello, Jack. I've heard a lot about you. And your teeth!" Toothsaid smiling.

Jack was confused and Tooth made him open his mouth to see his teeth. White as always. She checked mine too. They were white but not as white as Jack's. Especially since I like chocolate. My second favorite thing about Valentine's Day. North introduced us to Sandeman, or Sandy, as they call him, but he was asleep. North woke him up.

"Hey, ho, anyone want to tell us why we're here?" Jack asked.

Sandy tried to explain with dream sand on top of his head but we couldn't understand. Sandy can't talk anyway.

"We must've done something really bad to get you four together? Are we on the naughty list?" I asked.

"Ha! On naughty list? Jack holds the record. You, Cupid, are on nice list. But, no matter. We overlook. Now we are wiping clean the slate," North said wiping his Naughty tattoo on his right arm.

"How come?" Jack asked.

"Ha! Good question," Bunny said.

"How come? I tell you, how come. Because now you are Guardians!" North said.

Chapter Two: Guardians? Our center?

Hold on. What? Guardians? Since when? The Yeti's cheered and held up flaming torches as the Elves played some music. So we don't have a choice in this? The Yeti's did a fire show with the flaming torches and the elves tried to give us necklaces and Jack some shoes. North was given a book and, at that point, I had enough and shot my heart arrow in the air making it explode and everyone stopped what they were doing.

"What makes you think we want to be Guardians?" I asked.

North just laughed, "Of course you do. MUSIC!"

The Elves played again.

"No music!" Jack said making the Elves stop, "This is all very flattering, but, uh, you don't want us. You're all hard work and deadlines and I'm snowballs and fun times."

"I'm all hard work but I don't do well with children. Just relationships with grown-ups and trying to keep the LGBTQ+ community alive. We're not Guardians," I said.

"Yeah. That's exactly what I said," Bunny said.

"Guys, I don't think you understand what it is we do," Tooth said before flying to the giant globe covered in small lights, "each of those lights is a child."

"A child who believes," North said, "and good or bad, naughty or nice, we protect them."

Tooth went back to looking at Jack's teeth. North told her not to so she left him alone.

"Okay. No more wishy-washy. Pitch is out there doing who knows

what!" North said.

"You mean the-the Boogeyman?" Jack asked.

"My old friend?" everyone looked at me, "it was a bad choice I made say 500 years ago but we're not friends anymore!"

"Anyway, yes!" North said, "when Pitch threatens us, he threatens them as well!"

"All the more reason to pick people more qualified," Jack said.

"Pick? You think we pick?" North asked, "no, you two were chosen! Like we were all chosen. By Man in Moon!"

"Pardon?" I asked.

"Last night, he chose you two," Tooth said.

"Maybe," Bunny said.

"Man in the Moon... He talks to you?" Jack asked.

"You see, you cannot say no. It is destiny," North said.

"But why wouldn't he tell me that himself?" Jack sighed, "after300 years, this is his answer? To spent eternity like you guys, cooped up in some... some hideout thinking of new ways to bribe kids? No, no. That's not for me! No offense."

"Offence taken," I said.

I have a hideout and that's a palace of hearts and love and a lot of pets. I like animals.

Bunny stammered, "how is that not offensive? You know what I think? I think we dogged a bullet. I mean, what's this clown know about bringing joy to children anyway? Same with Miss Love over here?"

"Fair point, Bunny," I said.

"Uh, you ever hear of a snow day?" Jack asked, "I know it's no hard-

boiled egg, but kids like what I do."

"But none of them believe in you, do they?" Bunny asked him, "You see, you're invisible, mate. It's like you don't even exist."

Tooth gasped, "Bunny. Enough."

"No. The kangaroo's right," Jack said.

"The-the-the what? What did you call me? I'm not a kangaroo, mate," Bunny said.

"Oh, and this whole time I thought you were. If you're not a kangaroo, what are you?"

"I'm a bunny. The Easter Bunny. People believe in me."

Then things got awkward. Sandy pat North's leg and he told me and jack to walk with him. We did, following him through the workshop seeing all the Yeti's make and paint toys for the kids. I thought the elves made the toys. I guess not. All the Yeti's were copying the toys from ice sculptures of them. North made one poor Yeti annoyed telling him to paint sixty blue robots red.

He faceplanted on the table and knocked the robot he had just finished painting to the side. I gave it back and patted his head feeling sorry for him. maybe I'll help him later. I kept following North. We went into North'soffice. It was part wood and part ice. He had ice blocks and sculptures everywhere. Candles, candy canes, books toys, and a Christmas tree. An Elf came over on a shelf with some fruitcake. North offered some but Jack refused so he threw it away. Poor fruitcake.

"Now we get down to tacks of brass," North said cracking his knuckles.

We were confused when the door shut and locked on its own. Northbacked us into the door.

"Who are you, Cupid and Jack Frost?" North asked, "what is your center?"

"Our center?" Jack asked.

"If Man in Moon chose you two to be Guardians, you must have something very special inside," North thought and took a Russiandoll of him off the shelf, "here. This how you see me, no? Very big, intimidating. But if you get to know me a little..." Northhanded Jack the doll, "Well, go on."

Jack opened the doll to see another North.

"You are downright jolly?" I asked.

"But not just jolly! I am also mysterious, and fearless, and caring," North said as Jack kept opening the dolls, "and at my center?"Jack opened the last doll to reveal a baby version of North.

"There's a tiny wooden baby," Jack said.

"Look closer. What do you see?" North asked.

"You have big eyes," I said.

"Yes! Big eyes. Very big. Because they are full of wonder. That is my center. It is what I was born with. Eyes that have always seen the wonder in everything! Eyes that see lights in the trees and magic in the air," we stepped out of North's office, "this wonder is what I put into the world! And what I protect in children. It is what makes me a Guardian. It is my center. What is yours?"

"I don't know," Jack said.

"I'm not sure but I think it's love and kindness. I've been on this Earth for 800 years and that is all I've wanted to do. Spread love and kindness. I love it and I want to keep sharing it with the world. Perhaps children too," I said.

North smiled and nodded and let Jack keep the baby Russian doll. We sawTooth fly past the window and Bunny and Sandy ran up to us.

"We have a problem, mate. Trouble at the tooth palace."

Chapter Three: We meet again

Northport on a giant coat with fur at the trims and a Russian fur hat and took us somewhere else. Jack didn't want to go with them. Especially not in some rickety old... sleigh? Some giant doors were opened to reveal Yeti's taking out some rabid reindeer's pulling a not so rickety or old sleigh. It looked cool really. Jack told him only one ride and got on. I was excited if anything.

I don't interfere with the Guardian's much, except that one Easter with bunny, but I always wondered what North's sleigh looked like and what it was like to ride in it. Bunny didn't want to get on but North forced him on and we started moving. We went through an ice tunnel, did some loopty-loops, and out of the Pole, into the air!

That was amazing and I am so riding with North in the sleigh again! He was right. Everyone loves the sleigh. Well, everyone except Bunny who wanted to be sick. North used a snow globe to make a portal to theTooth Palace. We arrived to see something I never wanted to see again. Pitch's nightmares. They were horses made of black sand. Pitch had a reputation for turning Sandy's dreams into nightmares.

They were chasing Tooth's fairies she called Baby Tooth or Teeth if it's a group. Jack only managed to save one. We chased one of the nightmares into the Palace where North defeated it spilling out some Teeth Capsules. Jack had taken over steering the sleigh while North took care of the nightmare but got distracted and we had a bit of a crash landing. I've had worse landings. We saw Tooth fly around in a panic saying how the nightmares had taken her fairies and the teeth. BabyTooth flew up to her and she was happy to see at least one was okay.

"I have to say, this is very, very exciting," an all too familiar British voice echoed throughout the Palace, "the Big Four, all in one place. I'm a little starstruck," Pitch appeared above us, "did you like my show on the Globe, North? Got you all together, didn't I?"

North scoffed. He planned this.

"Pitch! You have got thirty seconds to return my fairies!" Toothsaid flying up to him but he disappeared.

"Or what?" Pitch asked appearing somewhere else, "you'll stick a quarter under my pillow?"

"Why are you doing this?" North asked him.

"Maybe I want what you have. To be believed in!" Pitchdisappeared, "Maybe I'm tired," he appeared somewhere else, "of hiding under beds!"

"Maybe that's where you belong!" Bunny said.

Pitch scoffed and appeared underneath where the Guardians were standing, "Go suck on an egg, rabbit."

Bunny tried to grab him but he disappeared again.

"Hang on. Is that Jack Frost?" Pitch's voice echoed, chuckling," since when are you all so chummy?"

"We're not," Jack said.

"Oh, good," Pitch said from behind us, "A neutral party. then I'm going to ignore you. But you must be used to that by now."

Pitch noticed me, "Well, well, well. Nice to see you again, Love. It's been a long time. 248 years if I remember correctly. I see you're a Guardian."

"Don't call me Love. And I'm a neutral party," I said.

"Then I'll ignore you too. You're used to that."

Bunny ran to attack Pitch but he disappeared to where we first saw him. Tooth took one of Bunny's boomerangs and tried to attack Pitchbut a nightmare stopped her. Pitch calmed it down.

"Look familiar, Sandman?" Pitch asked him, "took me a while to

perfect this little trick. Cupid was there when I did it the first time. Turning dreams into nightmares. Don't be nervous. It only riles them up more. They smell fear, you know."

"What fear? Of you?" Bunny laughed taking his boomerang back fromTooth, "no one has been afraid of you since the Dark Ages!"

"Oh, the Dark Ages. Everyonefrightened, miserable. Such happy times for me. Oh, the power I wielded! But then the Man in the Moon chose you to replace my fear with your wonder and light. Lifting their hearts and giving them hope. Meanwhile, everyone wrote me off as just a bad dream. 'Oh, there's nothing to be afraid of! There's no such thing as the Boogeyman!' Well, that's all about to change!"

I know he had this trouble even before we stopped being friends but I didn't realize it hurt him this bad. I guess I made it worse. The Tooth Palace started to fade.

"Oh, look. It's happening already," Pitch said.

"What is?" Jack asked.

Tooth gasped.

"Children are waking up and realizing the Tooth Fairy never came," Pitch said, "I mean, such a little thing. But to a child..."

"What's going on?" I asked.

"They... they don't believe in me anymore..." Tooth said.

"Didn't they tell you, Love? It's great being a Guardian. But there's a catch. if enough kids stop believing, everything your friends protect, wonder, hopes, and dreams, it all goes away. And little by little, so do they," Pitchchuckled, "No Christmas, or Easter, or little fairies that come in the night. There will be nothing but fear and darkness. And me. It's your tun not to be believed in!"

Bunny had enough and threw a boomerang at Pitch. He climbed on his nightmare and rode to the bottom of the Palace. We followed him down until we reached a lagoon and he was gone. Tooth

started telling Jack about why she and her fairies collect children's teeth while North and Bunny questioned me.

"Cupid. I have question. Why does Pitch call you Love?" North asked.

"Just some stupid nickname he gave me when we were friends. I hate it now," I said.

"I thought you said you and pitch were friends about 500 years ago but Pitch said 248 years," Bunny said.

"I lose track of the years. I have been here maybe over 800 years," I said.

We then started listening to Tooth. Apparently, we all were someone else before we were chosen to be who we are. Jack was now determinant to get his Teeth Capsule to see his memories and know why he was here. Unfortunately, Pitch has them. Jack wanted to get his teeth back to see his memories. Toothwanted to saw something but some of her feathers fell off her and the painting on the wall on the other side of the lagoon started fading away. North started thinking.

"Idea!" North said pointing a sword at Bunny, "We will collect the teeth!"

"What?" Tooth asked.

"We get teeth, children start believing in you!"

"We're talking seven continents and millions of kids!"

"Give me break. You know how many toys I deliver in one night?"

"And eggs I hide in one day?"Bunny asked.

"And, Jack, Cupid, if you help us, we will get you your memories," North said smiling.

Well, what do we have to lose?

"We're in," Jack and I said.

Chapter Four: No Easter hope

I tried doing two jobs at once. I did my job and collect teeth to help Tooth feel believed in. For gifts, I gave the kids chocolate. Tooth, dentists, and parents will hate me for it but it's all I have. By the next morning, I had done hardly anything. I was being slow so I had about twenty teeth in total.

"Hello, Love," Pitch said from behind me.

I turned to him, "I do wish you would stop calling me that."

"What would you prefer? Cupid? (Y/N)?"

"You have no right to call me(Y/N) after ruining everything I worked hard on!"

"Still introducing yourself as Cupid then? I remember when you first told me your name. I believe it was 153 years after we met and we started dating. I loved your name and I always will."

"Pitch, talk about our relationship again and I will drag you to the Guardians myself!"

"Fine. Be that way. Just remember the past will never be rewritten. You were my Nightmare Queen."

I shot my golden arrow at him but he disappeared into the shadows. TheGuardians can't know of mine and Pitch's relationship. If they knew, they'd not make me a Guardian. Then again, don't know if I want to be one. I just hope Pitch will keep his mouth shut about it. We promised we would never speak of it. But he never keeps a promise. I know that from experience.

I later caught Pitch and his nightmares caught in a fight with the Guardians so I joined them. Sandy was whipping the nightmares that surrounded him while Pitch watched. I flew up to help sandy but Pitch made his Nightmares surround me. I took out my bow and

gold arrow and started shooting. Only for Pitch to make a bow of his own and shoot Sandy in the back.

Sandy's golden sand robes and his golden sand cloud turned into black sand. Soon, Sandy was gone. Jack flew up to confront Pitch who let his nightmares attack him and we lost Jack too. Or so we thought. With a big burst of energy, Jack made all the nightmares shatter into little ice crystals. But the nightmares were still surrounding me so I decided to try something. I flew away and the nightmares followed.

Once I was far enough away from them, I took my gold and heart arrow, put them both in my bow, pulled the string back, and released. I watched the two arrows merge into a golden heart arrow and made an explosion of gold hearts killing all the nightmares. I joined the Guardians and went back to the Pole. We held a memorial for Sandy. Afterward, we watched the lights on the globe go out. All the children aren't believing them anymore.

Bunny had a solution. Easter is tomorrow and he needs our help. As much as it pained North to say: this time Easter is more important than Christmas. That is saying a lot from a man who's always come first when it came to holidays. Bunny and Easter had always been second while North and Christmas were first. North told us to go to the sleigh but Bunny had a better way of getting into his home.

He banged his foot on the floor making a big hole appear underneath us and we slid down. After being Alice from Alice in Wonderland, we arrived in the Warren. It was like spring and Ancientruins with sentient stone eggs and small, normal eggs that hadn't been painted yet. There were little yells from a tunnel in front of us and we got ready to attack. But, it wasn't anything dangerous. Itwas Jamie's little sister, Sophie. Sophie noticed an Elf that came with us and started chasing it.

"What is she doing here?"Bunny asked.

North checked for a snow globe. That's probably how she got here but how did she get it? Did I miss something? I told them not to look at me or Jack because we're invisible to her. Tooth then tried to help by showing Sophie some teeth with blood and gums on

them. Sophie ran off wailing. Nice work, Tooth.

"Blood and gums?" I asked both.

"When was the last time you guys actually hung out with kids?" Jack asked.

"We are very busy bringing joy to children. We don't have time..." North stopped talking when Sophie walked past chasing butterflies, "... for children!"

"If one little kid can ruin easier, then we're in worse shape than I thought," Jack said making a snowflake and letting it fly to Bunny, hitting his nose making his mood change.

Time to paint some eggs. I know Easter is a big holiday but I didn't realize how many eggs needed to be painted for it. There were more eggs than I could count! The plain eggs went past some flowers which painted them blue, pink, and yellow. The eggs jumped into a purple lake which gave them more colors which I couldn't name because there were so many. The eggs then when down some vines that painted patterns on them.

Bunny walked past the sameYeti that was painting the robots a few days ago. He was painting some eggs red when Bunny told him to paint them blue. He had painted two pyramids of eggs already! I still feel sorry for him. I gave him one of those giant Hershey's kisses as a well done for all his hard work and all this annoyance he's been put through. He deserves it. We watched the eggs go through different tunnels to the different country's while Sophie fell asleep.

Jack took her home. Easter, unfortunately, didn't go as well as we had hoped. Pitch's nightmares had invaded the tunnels and smashed every egg. Nothing made it to the surface. Jack had been gone all night before coming back. North told him what happened. Tooth went over to him and noticed he had something in his hand. His Tooth Capsule. Not just his, mine too. He's been with Pitch! Bunny was upset with Jack. Jack left dropping my Tooth Capsule and the baby Russian doll of North. I took my ToothCapsule and flew off to my Palace.

Chapter Five: The final light

I arrived at my Palace and went to the room with my version of the globe inside. I did have lights showing the children who believed in the Guardians and lights for the people who still love each other because I helped them. But the lights of the children were fading. I left the room to the highest balcony and looked out among the clouds. I looked at my Tooth Capsule. I don't want this. I had the urge to throw it but I didn't want to ruin Tooth's hard work.

"You always came up here when you wanted to think. I see you haven't changed," Pitch said from behind me.

"And you always hated this place. You hate daylight and my home is full of it," I said not looking at him.

"I would only be out in the daylight for you, Love."

I shot my heart arrow at his feet, making him fall at the explosion.

"WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT CALLING ME LOVE?!" I yelled.

"I can call you what I want,(Y/N)," Pitch said standing up, "what happened to the angel I loved?"

"I moved on!"

"That doesn't mean we can't try again."

"Try again?! No! There is no trying again! I divorced you for a reason! We made a deal that you broke! We would be friends as long as we stayed out of each other's way when it came to work! You broke our deal so many years after you proposed in this very spot and after we got married! Eventually, I had enough and you know exactly what happened next and we never spoke again!"

I wouldn't be so mad at him if he didn't do what he did when I had planned to ask him a question. I wanted to ask him if we could finally start a family and have a child. But I never had the chance

because of what he was doing. I want to give him another chance but I can't trust him.

"I did it so the world would believe in us again. I didn't think it would ruin things between us," Pitch said.

"EXACTLY! YOU DON'T THINK! IF YOU HAD TOLD ME WHAT YOU WERE DOING, WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING THIS CONVERSATION NOW AND WE WOULD STILL BE TOGETHER!" I yelled, "I loved you, Pitch. I really did. I didn't ask for much. Just you, your love, and for you to keep your side of the deal. But then you broke my heart."

I turned from him.

"Tonight I will snap out the rest of the lights of children who still believe. Tell the Guardians and stop me before it's too late. And I'm not telling you this because I still love you, I'm telling you this as a cry for help. Goodbye, (Y/N) Cupid."

With that, he was gone. Why is he crying for help? Whatever the reason is, I told the Guardians but left out the argument and Pitch's cry for help. Unfortunately, Easter had taken its toll on everyone. North was relying on his sword to keep him stood up, Tooth couldn't fly anymore and Bunny was now a small bunny rabbit. I almost forgot what Pitch told me. It's great being a Guardian.

But there's a catch. If enough kids stop believing, everything the Guardians protect, wonder, hopes, and dreams, it'll all go away. And little by little, so will they. They're fading away. Despite this, we went in the sleigh to the only believer left in the whole world. Jack was already there with the last light. Jamie. Jamie was happy to see everyone after thinking it was all a dream and, to add on to this miracle, he could see me too!

Our happy moment was ruined by Pitch who made it thunder and lightning as he looked over the town from his cloud of black sand. Jack flew up to confront Pitch while the rest of us ran off with Jamie. We wound up in the same alleyway we met Bunny a few days ago. Jack made a crash landing down to us. We went to assist him.

"That was good try, Jack 'A' for effort," North said.

"He's stronger. I can't beat him," Jack said.

Thunder banged as we heard Pitch's laughter and saw his shadow roam around.

"All this fuss over one little boy, and still he refuses to stop believing. Very well, There are other ways to snuff out a light," Pitch said making all the lights around us shut off.

"If you want him, you're gonna have to through me!" Bunny said.

Pitch's hand still a shadow appeared under him, "look how fluffy you are. Would you like a scratch behind the ears?"

Bunny jumped in North's hand, "Don't you even think about it!"

"I can't tell you how happy it makes me to see you all like this," Pitch appeared on one of his nightmares and some more behind him, "you look awful."

Jamie told Jack he was scared so he knelt down to comfort him only to zone out. He snapped out of it. Pitch laughed.

"So what do you think, Jamie? Do you believe in the Boogey-" Pitch was cut off by a snowball to the face.

Jack. Everyone tried not to laugh. Jack told Jamie that we need to get his friends. Jack made the floor ice so we could use things nearby to sled through the neighborhood. We collected Jamie,s friends. Pippa, Monty, Cupcake, Claude, and Caleb. All of them believed and saw us. They all came with us until we stopped, seeing Pitch create a storm of nightmares and black sand, surrounding us.

Pitch was almost laughing at the sight of us with six children by our sides. North tried to point his sword up at him but couldn't keep himself up so he put it back down. I assured the kids that all of Pitch's creations were only bad dreams. Bunny told them we would protect them but Pitch shot back asking who would protect us. Well, only two of us can protect the Guardians and the kids and that's me and Jack. Or so we thought. All the children said they

would protect the Guardians.

"Still think there's no such thing as the Boogeyman?" Pitch asked.

All the nightmares charged towards us.

"I do believe in you. I'm just not afraid of you!" Jamie said.

The Nightmares didn't stop. Jamie reached out his hand and...

Chapter Six: The final battle

Jamie reached out his hand and the Nightmares turned into Sandy's dreams when they hit his hand. All the dreams lit up the dark streets and into people's homes, making them dream of the Guardians so everyone went back to normal. North could stand, Tooth could fly and Bunny was his normal six-foot-one again. Pitch wasn't finished with us. HisNightmares started attacking us so we fought back.

North made Yeti's, Elves, and toys come from the Pole, and Bunny made the giant stone eggs come from The Warren. I took a snow globe from North and got my pets here to fight too. We attacked and destroyed Nightmares and the kids turned them into dreams. Jack confronted Pitch until we joined the fun. We fought on the rooftop until North took Pitch off his Nightmare horse and onto the street.

Pitch took out his scythe and started attacking us but didn't even try hurting me. Soon he was cornered. Or so we thought. He disappeared into the shadows. We looked around until Bunny saw Pitch behind Jack trying to kill him with his scythe. Bunny threw a boomerang to stop him but that only delayed him. Pitch tried one more swing but he was stopped by a golden rope around his wrist, dragging him away.

We followed to see none other than Sandy himself alive and well. He punched Pitch in the air still attached to his whips. He tipped a hat to Jamie and his friends before forcing Pitch to the ground and knocking him out. We said hello to Sandy before letting him work his magic. Dreams for everyone all over the world to remember the Guardians and believe in me and Jack. All Nightmares were turned into dreams of all kinds from fish to dinosaurs.

Jack then started a snowball fight. Same old Jack. Everyone joined in. Well, it was all fun and games until Pitch woke up but, it was too late for him. The children had stopped believing in him and ran right through him. Pitch seemed scared now. He started running.

We caught up with him at the frozen lake near Jamie's house where Pitch bumped into North.

"Leaving the party so soon?" North asked.

"You didn't even say goodbye," Tooth said tossing him a quarter.

Pitch was confused until Tooth punched him in the face knocking a back tooth out. Ouch.

"And that's for my fairies," Tooth said as her little fairies squeaked angrily at Pitch.

"You can't get rid of me!"Pitch said standing up, "Not forever! There will always be fear!"

"So what?" North asked, "as long as one child believes, we will be here to fight fear."

"Really? Then what are they doing here?" Pitch motioned to the Nightmares around us.

North laughed, "They can't be my Nightmares. I'm not afraid."

Pitch had a look of realization and shock.

"Looks like it's your fear they smell, My King," I said smirking.

It felt nice to use that old nickname again. Pitch gasped in horror and started running. The Nightmares chased him. They caught him and dragged him back down to his lair never to be seen again. Tooth hugged Jack out of happiness before letting him go.

"Are you ready now, Jack? Cupid? To make it official?" North asked.

Well, now Pitch is gone, what do I have to lose? We nodded. A Yeti gave North the book we saw when he first tried to make us Guardians and opened it.

"Then is time you both take Oath," North said looking in the book, "Will you, Jack Frost and Cupid, vow to watch over the children of

the world, to guard them with your life, their hopes, their wishes, and their dreams, for they are all that we have, all that we are, and all we will ever be?"

We looked at Jamie who nodded and smiled.

"I will," Jack said smiling.

"I will," I said smiling.

"Then, congratulations, Jack Frost and Cupid, for you are now, and forevermore, Guardians!" North said smiling.

Everyone cheered. North kissedJack's cheeks and chuckled. My smile didn't last long, however. I feel like I didn't answer Pitch's cry for help. And this celebration doesn't feel right without him here for support. I guess now thathe's gone, I see how much I actually need him with me. And how the world needs fear. Perhaps not as much as he forced on everyone but balanced out like how everyone else does what they do.

All the Guardians have important roles in the world to make it the way it is but you can't have the perfect world without a little bit of fear. North's sleigh came to pick us up and we were ready to leave. Jack had to assure Jamie who was scared of Pitch coming back and not believing us. Once that was over with, we left in the sleigh. But all I could think about was Pitch. I wish we could've helped him. Perhaps I'll go to his lair later.

That's what I did. I searched around but he was nowhere to be found. I swore I watched him get dragged down here. Oh! He must be in the bedroom. Not that he sleeps anyway. He's the Nightmare King. He doesn't need sleep. I checked there and, just as I thought, he was in here. Still as black and dark as I remembered it. Pitch was sitting on his side of the bed facing away from me. Isay his side. It was his side when we were a couple.

"Pitch?" I said approaching the bed.

"Thank you," Pitch said.

"For what?"

"For coming to my aid. You got the message."

"Hold on. You wanted this?"

"I wanted you to free me from the chains I was bonded to by my mistakes. You freed me."

"You're welcome then."

"You should go and never comeback. I promise I will never interfere with yours or the Guardians' work again."

"If that is what you wish. But take this."

I placed a dark chocolate heart-shaped cake on the bed. It was always his favorite. I also gave him a golden heart locket. Inside, a picture of me and a life quote I always loved: It's only with the heart that some can see clearly. What's essential is invisible to the eye. And one last thing: One last kiss. After that, I left him as he asked. I went back to work doing what I do best. Years past and Pitch kept his promise. I never saw him again. But the world felt lonely without him. I never told the Guardians about Pitch and I, however. It's best if they never know.

Chapter Seven: Talking to Pitch

[image]

I was in my Palace tending to my animals when I saw something in the distance. Northern Lights. North wants us at the Pole. I said goodbye to the animals and flew to the Pole. Everyone was already here.

"This better be important, North. It's a week until Valentine's day and I'm making a big cake for the 800-year special!" I said.

"Man in moon wants to tell us something," North said.

Well, now things got interesting. The Man in the Moon shone his light onto a spot on the floor. The spot opened and a crystal came out of the floor. North explained to me and Jack that Man in the Moon had chosen a new Guardian. Really? I'm surprised. Who else could be a Guardian to protect the children? I can't think of anyone. Not even the Leprechaun. Well, after a few moments, we saw who it was. Pitch!? Why Pitch?! He hasn't been seen or heard from in maybe five years! Not even to visit me and I've left him alone as he asked. I keep my promises and he's kept his. The Guardians were confused, not to mention angry after Pitch tried to make the children not believe in them.

"Pitch?! Really?! After all he's done, he's chosen to be a Guardian!?" Bunny said angrily.

"Cupid. You know Pitch. What was he like when you knew him. It might explain why Man in Moon chose him," North said.

"I think I know why but you won't like my theory," I said.

"Go on."

"The world and kids need fear. It's how the world works. Without fear, is anyone really human? We just have to teach Pitch that we don't need as much as he tried to force on everyone."

"Pitch can't be taught! He's a threat to everyone!" Bunny argued.

"WELL, YOU DON'T KNOW HIM AS I DID! HE CAN BE TAUGHT IF WE JUST EXPLAIN AND IF YOU GIVE HIM A CHANCE!" I yelled.

"You are protective of Pitch. Is there something you are not telling us?" North asked me.

"I won't be a Guardian if I explain," I said sitting on the banister and looking down at the Yeti's preparing for next Christmas.

"What do you mean?" Jack asked.

"Pitch and I, 253 years ago, used to be married. We were both alone before we met sometime after the Dark Ages. At first, it was just the occasional meetings then we started talking daily. Those daily talks turned into dating and that dating turned into marriage. We made a deal when we became friends; we would never get in the way of each other's work, ever. One day, he broke that deal. I didn't want to say anything at first but I couldn't keep it quiet. I reminded him about the deal but he didn't stop so, naturally, I asked for a divorce. He agreed and we never spoke again. I thought that was it. End of marriage, end of story. Then he threatened you and you know the story from there. Before our final battle with Pitch, he came to my palace begging for help. We gave it to him and now he wishes to be alone."

"You went to him after we stopped him?" Bunny asked.

"I felt like I had to. He said thank you and that he wanted to be left alone. So, I left him alone and we haven't heard from him," I said.

"And you did not think it important to tell us about you and Pitch?" North asked.

"Look, if you're going to belittle me every time I mention my relationship with Pitch then I shouldn't be here. It was nice knowing you all."

I flew back home. They don't trust Pitch but Man in the Moon obviously sees something in him. After a while, I went back to the Pole and told the others I would talk to Pitch because I'm the only

one who knows how to get into his lair. They let me. So, I went to his lair. But he was nowhere to be found. Did he leave?

"Looking for something, Love?" I heard Pitch ask.

I looked around.

"I thought I told you to leave me alone," Pitch's voice echoed around me

"Well, right now, I had no choice. We need you to come to the Pole. Now," I said.

"For what?" he finally appeared, "Punishment? Or just to torture me about how everyone believes in you and not me? Tell me."

"You have been chosen to be a Guardian by the Man in the Moon."

"What?"

"You heard me. Man in the Moon has chosen you to be a Guardian and we need to talk to you about things."

"And you were told to fetch me because you know me best."

"They know about us. Just come to the Pole, five minutes then you can be back here before you know it."

After some thought, Pitch came with me to the Pole. The Guardians explained everything to him and then he left, not wanting to be a guardian. And I can't blame him. After everything we've done to him and the fact that he hasn't been seen in years, he probably doesn't want anything to do with us anymore. I reminded the Guardians that I would talk to Pitch, I didn't say I would make him join.

I went back to my palace where I continued to prepare for my 800th anniversary of Valentine's day. The giant cake I mentioned was still being designed. I know a lot of the children and adults won't see it but this is for me, the Guardians, and their workers. I like my cake but not enough to keep it to myself. Maybe I'll even give one to Pitch if he doesn't tell me to get out after today. We'll

see. I've just got to get things done within a week because I left it late.

(A/N: I left this a long time but I'm back, and I'm going to try and finish it. Sorry for the wait)

Chapter Eight: Valentine's Day

[image]

Valentine's Day is here and, to be honest, it doesn't feel right to celebrate it. At least I don't. Everyone else will but I don't want to. Either way, I still have a job, so what choice do I have? I collected my bow and arrows and flew out of my palace. This is a day of love, so I need to spread the love the best I can. I arrived in the town that Jamie lived in to observe the people out and about. But something didn't feel right.

Everyone was with their loved ones or soon-to-be loved ones but something felt off. Everyone seemed too confident. I know that should be a good thing but I've seen many times that people can be scared or nervous about confessing, or first dates, or a hundredth date. Pitch isn't interfering. I know that should be a good thing as that was part of the deal but, if I'm honest, I might need it. But he won't come out. He hates the daylight.

Well, I'm not forcing him out in the daylight. I'll wait for nightfall. Besides, it's the most romantic time during Valentine's. So, I did my job during the day all over the world until the sun started to set. By then, I decided not to go into his lair to go get him. He needs to come out at his own choice. So, I waited longer and did whatever I could to draw him out. And boy was I patent. It was late in the night when Pitch appeared. Of course, I didn't know that at the time.

"If this is your way of summoning me, you've clearly forgotten how," Pitch said from behind me

"I need your help," I said turning to him.

"I think you've asked the wrong person for that."

"No one else can do it."

"Lo-... Cupid, I'm not a guardian. All I do is cause trouble."

"Which is exactly what I need. Now follow me. Please?"

Pitch shook his head but agreed. So, I took him around the town I was in, looking for someone that we could both help. We soon found someone who I already knew needed help. It was a nineteen-year-old boy who was going through tough times. He was gay and in love with a boy in his school who he didn't know was gay or not. I knew the boy was bisexual but I needed them both together.

The boy we were with hadn't come out to his parents either out of fear of being rejected. But I felt he needed that little push to confess and confidence to come out. He was asleep in a pile of his studies. Sandy had already done his part by giving the boy a dream but I needed to ruin it. So, I told Pitch to turn it into a nightmare. Pitch hesitated saying that he couldn't do that again. Besides, Sandy was already mad at him for everything.

I told him that I would take the blame for it if Sandy found out and that I really needed him to do this. He reminded me of our deal and I told him the deal was off. So, hesitantly, Pitch did as I asked. He made the dream into a nightmare and we waited. By that time, I had left Pitch alone to get the other boy. I shot him with my arrow to give him the feeling that he should meet up with the other boy. He was awake, luckily for me. Having an off dealing thanks to me, he called up the boy asking if they could meet up in the park.

He agreed so they went to the park. I would meet Pitch there too demanding an explanation. All in due time. We just had to wait. We watched as the two met up and the boy I asked Pitch to give a nightmare to told the other what his nightmare was about. It was about his parents taking his coming out badly and them kicking him out. The other boy assured him that everything would be fine. That's when I used my arrow on them to help them confess to each other. And it worked. They would soon leave.

"I don't understand," Pitch spoke up, "Why did you need me for this?"

"To show you that fear can be a good thing," I said.

"Others would disagree."

"Pitch, look at what happened just now. Fear can be good and it can bring people together."

"No, love can."

"These two wouldn't have been brought together tonight if it wasn't for your nightmare. I can't do that. Only you can. Pitch, whether you agree with me or not, the people need fear. If we don't have fear, we'll never have moments like that. And I believe that is why the Man in the Moon chose you to be a Guardian. You're the one who usually makes things happen for good or bad. It's how life is. You can learn when to use your fear for good. Use it to do what you did today. I'm not making your decisions for you. This is your choice."

"Why are you trying to help me?"

"Because you deserve a chance. Just listen to what I said and do your best. And, if you want to keep helping me, you're more than welcome to."

I walked away to continue my job and, surprisingly, Pitch followed. It was mostly him watching me work while he did his best to do something too. And he only helped me when I asked for it. I don't care if the Guardians catch me with Pitch. I'm just trying to help. But I'm having a bit of Deja vu. This feels like the time we first met and started to get along.

Could we do that again? Start over? Could we fall in love again and get this right this time? I don't know. I guess only time will tell. When the night came to an end, we parted ways. But not before I gave him some of the cake I made for the 800th anniversary of Valentine's Day. He took it and disappeared into the shadows. We'll meet again soon. Perhaps tomorrow night.

(A/N: Thank you @suga_ouran_academy for the cake above.)